

Extracts.

LAST AND BEST.
The days glide by, like years at times;
The end draws near, the work is done;
I stand amidst the weary throng,
That wait the gentle voice of dawn.
My path is strewn with many a flower,
Yet still the weaver weaves.
I turn and gaze to find the stars
Of years, until they seem to close;
In one dim point, I see
Full many faces that I know—
Faces that vanished long ago,
But still are dear to me.
And many faces, dear, dear faces,
That with me from year to year,
But none that I have known,
Their course with mine is well set;
The old ones breathe, and new ones meet,
And strange and true.
But one sweet face that I love
I seek in memory, and I find
The face I love, the face I love,
The face I love, the face I love.
With living love and tender hand,
Makes, amidst my path, a shadow-land—
This is my life, my life.

THE DRIED BEEF OF THE GRISONS.

The dried beef is a production of the Grisons, for which they are indebted to their climate. At the altitude of their valleys, the air is so dry that for nine months out of the twelve months has no tendency to decomposition. Availing themselves of this favorable condition they kill in the autumn the best and perk them well in the ensuing year. It is highly salted and hung up to dry. Nothing more is done to it, except drying. In three or four months' time it is not only dried, but also cooked, that is to say the air has given it all the cooking it will ever receive. It has become as dry and hard as a board, and is generally of the color of an old mahogany table. Externally there is nothing to suggest the idea of meat; it is covered with cobwebs, dust and mould, and is undistinguishable from fragments of the mummies of the sacred bulls taken from the catacombs of the Serapeum at Memphis. When your host brings from his cellar the bag of the mummy of a Griston cow, shrink to the dimensions of the human limb, and tell you that it is to be your dinner, you are disposed to advise him to take it to the trustees of the British Museum. He is, however, about to prepare some for your repast, and you watch the process with curiosity. It is a very simple one: the material is cut across the grain with a very sharp knife in shavings, not thicker than writing-paper. When it is cut the length of the fibre it would be as unmanageable in the mouth as a piece of whipcord, or a fiddle-string. Curiosity again, somewhat stimulated by necessity, for the only alternative is the meagre cheese, and last impulse, with many sighs and after much agitation, to carry one of the shavings to your mouth. After a week or two's experience you will begin to think that it is not badly flavoured, nor unusually repugnant to the process of digestion. A *Walt in the Grisons*.

AFRICAN NOTIONS OF FRUGALITY AND ASSURANCE.

The Kroomen are a merry set of fellows, and no matter how hard has been the day's work, they will end it by shouting and dancing to their heart's content, under the name of "making play." As a set-off to their high-spiritedness, they are notorious drunkards, liars, and such thieves that they are said to be quite capable of saving the capsize traveller struggling in the waves with one hand, while with the other they are adroitly picking his pockets. There are no laws against polygamy in a man may have as many wives as he likes, and he has the means wherewith to pay for them. To pay for her and to take her home is the sum total of the marriage ceremony amongst them. The more wives a man has, the more is his name, and the more is his name, the more is his name. Even the older wives have no objection to his introducing rivals into the family. The first "married" wife is always the head of the house and rules the other wives with a high hand. Accordingly the more junior wives her husband has, the more jealous she becomes under her to obey her. A wife is badly treated she can take refuge with her relations, when a "big palaver" ensues. When, as sometimes happens, the case goes against the husband, then the children go to him as his share of the family property. When a Krooman marries his first wife, he takes up quarters in her father's house; when he is able to buy a few more he commences housekeeping on his own account, and then each wife has a separate hut for her own use. — *Recess of Manhood*.

THE VIRGINAL.

The virginale (the favorite instrument of Queen Elizabeth) was made sometimes in the form of a square piano-forte, sometimes in a triangular shape, and it was played in the same manner as our household instrument. The chief difference consisted in the virginale being plucked by a quill (in imitation of the plectrum of the ancient lyre) instead of being struck by a hammer. Some writers have supposed that the name of this instrument was intended to convey a compliment to Queen Elizabeth, the "virgin queen," but as the instrument was named in the inscription (of the time of Henry VIII.) on the walls of the ancient manor-house at Leckenfeld, Yorkshire, this is impossible. Dr. Johnson suggests that the instrument was so called "because played upon chiefly by young ladies," and a modern writer, with better judgment, ascribes it to the fact, as we have seen, how, in the pleasant twilight of convents and old halls, it served to lead sweet voices singing hymns to the Virgin. Henry VIII. was very fond of the instrument, and his daughters should excel in musical accomplishments, and their talents appear to have been of no mean order. Sir Frederick Madox, in his introduction to the "Privy Purse Expenses of the Princess Mary," says, "In regard to the lighter accomplishments of music and dancing, Mary equalled, if not excelled, Elizabeth. Of the first, indeed, she appears to have been passionately fond, as intimated in the letter addressed to her from Queen Catherine, when she played on the instruments, the virginale, regale, and lute, and, according to Madox, excelled on the latter to a surprising degree. So early as 1525, we find particular directions given to her governess, in regard to the princess's occasional practice in both the above accomplishments; and in the letter of material advice sent by her mother after her separation, she is desired sometimes to use her virginale, or lute, if she had any." From the expenses contained in Sir Frederick's volume, we learn that this instrument was not disregarded; and after Mary's restoration to favour, she seems to have been especially applied to the cultivation of music. Mr. Parker is named as her teacher on the virginale, and Philip van Wilder, of the Privy Chamber, as instructor on the lute. She was accustomed, it seems, to take these instruments with her wherever she removed, and items often occur of payments to a person coming from London to tune them. Princess Elizabeth's love of music is well known, and has frequently been dwelt upon. Camden, in giving an account of her studies, says that "she understood the Latin, French, and Italian tongues, and was indifferently well versed in the Greek. Neither did she neglect music, so far forth as might become a princess, being able to sing, and play on the lute prettily and sweetly." — *Recess of Manhood*.

FOUNDATION OF THE LINNEAN SOCIETY.

The Linnean Society, it would appear, like many another great institution, had its origin in an accident. The late Sir John E. Smith, then a medical student, was breakfasting one day with Sir Joseph Banks, when the latter told him that he had just had an offer of the manuscripts and botanical collections of the late Carl Linnaeus for a thousand pounds, but that he had declined to buy them. Young Smith, whose zeal for botany was great, begged his father to advance to him the money, and at length persuaded him to do so, though not without difficulty. It may appear strange that Sweden should consent to part with the treasures of her far-famed naturalist; and indeed the king, Gustavus III., who had been absent in France, was much displeased, on his return, at hearing that a vessel had just sailed for England with these collections. He immediately dispatched a vessel to the Sound, to intercept it, but it was too late. The Linnean Society, MSS. &c., arrived safely in London in 1754, packed in twenty-six cases, and cost the late Sir John Smith £1,000. The following year Smith was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society, and devoted himself more to botanical studies than to his profession as a physician. In 1792 he had the honour of being engaged to teach botany to Queen Charlotte and the princesses, and he was knighted by the Prince Regent in 1814. At his death, in 1820, he left the celebrated collection, with Sir Joseph Banks's additions, to be purchased by the Linnean Society, — *Canell's "Old and New London."*

THE SHAKERS.

THE EIGHTEEN SOCIETIES OF SHAKERS. "The Shakers have eighteen societies, scattered over seven States; but each of these societies contains several families; and as each family is practically a nation, community, there are in fact fifty-eight Shaker communities. These fifty-eight families contain an aggregate population of 2,415 souls, and own real estate amounting to about one hundred thousand acres, of which nearly fifty thousand are in their own hands. The Shakers are a celibate sect, composed of men and women living together in what they call 'families,' and having agriculture as the basis of their industry, though most of them unite with this one or more other avocations. They have a uniform style of dress; call each other by their first names; say yes and nay, but not by the usual terms of address (England); and it is possible that they have the example of Mr. Aldrich, and are as naturalised among us. — *Figaro*.

INSURANCES.

BRITISH AND FOREIGN MARINE INSURANCE COMPANY, LIMITED.

THE Undersigned, Agents for the above Company, are prepared to issue Policies on the O.S.S. Co's. P. & O. Co's. and M. & M. Co's. Steamers at the following Rates, less 15% discount.

Butterfield & Swire, Agents.

Im 891 Hongkong, 8th June, 1875.

ROYAL EXCHANGE ASSURANCE CORPORATION.

THE Undersigned, Agents of the above Corporation, are prepared to grant Policies against Fire at Current Rates, less 20% discount.

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NORTH BRITISH AND MERCANTILE INSURANCE COMPANY.

INCORPORATED BY ROYAL CHARTER AND SPECIAL ACTS OF PARLIAMENT.

Established 1800.

CAPITAL—£2,000,000.

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Detached and semi-detached Dwelling Houses, removed from, 1% per cent. per annum.

Other Dwelling Houses, used exclusively as such, and their contents, 1% per cent. per annum.

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Shops, &c., and their contents, 1% per cent. per annum.

SHORT PERIOD INSURANCES.

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Above one month, and not exceeding 3 months, 1% of the annual rate.

Above 3 months, and not exceeding 6 months, 1% of the annual rate.

Above 6 months, and not exceeding 12 months, 1% of the annual rate.

Im 1003 Hongkong, 8th May, 1874.

IMPERIAL FIRE INSURANCE COMPANY.

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FIRST-CLASS RISK.

At Current Rates, and on Tuesday evening they meet in the assembly-hall for singing, marching, &c. Wednesday night is devoted to a union meeting for conversation. Thursday night is a "labouring meeting," which means the regular religious service, where they labour to get good. Friday is devoted to new songs and hymns; and Saturday evening to worship. On Sunday morning, finally, they visit at each other's rooms, three or four sisters visiting the brethren in each room, by appointment, and engaging in singing and in conversation upon general subjects.

RELIGIOUS SERVICES OF THE SHAKERS.

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MARINE DEPARTMENT.

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FIRE DEPARTMENT.

Policies issued for long or short periods at current rates.

LIFE DEPARTMENT.

Policies issued for sums not exceeding £5,000, on reasonable terms.

HOLLIDAY, WISE & Co., Agents.

Im 1003 Hongkong, 24th July, 1872.

MANCHESTER FIRE ASSURANCE COMPANY OF MANCHESTER AND LONDON.

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